



# Workforce Demographics for Minnesota Dentists

April 2003

In October of 2002, the Health Workforce Analysis Program in the Office of Rural Health and Primary Care sent a special survey to all Minnesota dentists. The survey asked dentists to identify their race and/or ethnicity, gender, and practice type and region. Designed to elicit an anonymous response, the survey was sent with the Minnesota Board of Dentistry's dentist license renewal application for 2003. Close to 2,950 of the approximately 3,700 dentists renewing their licenses responded to the special survey for a response rate of 80 percent.

## Findings from the special survey reveal that:

- The vast majority of dentists (96.5 percent) licensed to practice in Minnesota identified themselves as white. By comparison, 89.4 percent of the state's population is identified as white in the 2000 census.<sup>1</sup>
- Those dentists (3.5 percent) who identified themselves as non-white included Asians (1.8 percent), African Americans (.7 percent), Hispanics/Latinos (.3 percent), Native Americans (.1 percent), and Other Ethnicity or Race (.4 percent). While more non-white students are training to become dentists (the share was 12.3 percent in Minnesota and 30 percent nationally in 2001<sup>2</sup>), the racial and ethnic distribution of dentists will not reflect the larger demographic make-up of the state's population for many years.
- Most (70 percent) non-white dentists reported practicing in the Twin Cities Metropolitan Region. Non-white dentists made up five percent of the metro region's dental workforce.
- The average and median age of the dental workforce is 48. Male dentists are, on average, 10 years older than female dentists.
- Female dentists currently make up 17 percent of the current dentist workforce. Female dentists will have a larger impact on the shape of the profession in the future as a larger proportion of Minnesota dentists under 40 are female (38 percent) and more dental students in Minnesota are female (43 percent<sup>3</sup>).

- Most dentists work in a private solo practice (48 percent) or a private group practice (37 percent).
- In terms of the distribution of dentists, some regions of the state are below the statewide average of 63 dentists per every 100,000 residents, including the northwest, north central, east central and southwest regions of the state (see Table 1).

Table 1: Dentist to Population Ratio by Region

Minnesota Region	Estimated Dentists per 100,000 Residents*
Northwest	52
Northeast	64
North Central	48
West Central	62
East Central	46
Southwest	50
Southeast	64
Twin Cities Region	69
<b>Statewide Statistic</b>	<b>63</b>

\* Estimate based on county Census 2000 data and a weighted count of dentists by region of primary practice that includes a calculation of survey non response.

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On the Web at:  
[www.health.state.mn.us/divs/chs/workdata.htm](http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/chs/workdata.htm)

<sup>1</sup> See Census 2000: race population by county, Minnesota State Demographer, Minnesota Planning, <http://www.mnplan.state.mn.us/demography/Cen2000redistricting/Cen00ctyracer.html>

<sup>2</sup> Health Professions Education in Minnesota: Results of the 2001 Minnesota Health Professions Trainee Exit Survey, Minnesota Department of Health, 2002 and Dental Student Demographic Estimates, 2001 American Dental Association.

<sup>3</sup> Health Professions Education in Minnesota: Results of the 2001 Minnesota Health Professions Trainee Exit Survey, Minnesota Department of Health, 2002.